

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) for Certain Combat-Disabled Uniformed Services Retirees

The Department of Defense, working together with the Department of Veteran Affairs, announces the start of a new compensation program for many disabled military retirees, Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The new special compensation became effective May 31, 2003, for qualified combat-related disabled retirees. Payments for qualified retirees will accrue beginning June 1, 2003, with first payments possible on July 1st.

Information is available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/crsc.html>

Eligible Members are those retirees who have 20 years of service for retired pay computation and who either have disabilities because of combat injuries for which they have been awarded the Purple Heart and are rated at least 10% disabled or who are rated at least 60% disabled because of armed conflict, hazardous duty, training exercises, or mishaps involving military equipment.

Payments will equal the amount of VA disability compensation (Veteran alone rates) for combat-related disabilities, but will be reduced for those retirees whose retired pay exceeds what they would have received for length of service. Payments are limited to the amount of the retired pay reduction resulting from receipt of VA disability compensation for qualified disabilities.

The payments are considered to be tax exempt pending a review by the Armed Forces Tax Council.

Members must apply to their own branch of service using **DD form 2860**, Application for Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The form is available on line at:

<http://www.dior.whs.mil/forms/DD2860.pdf>

Each Uniformed Service will review the applications of their own retirees, with the Department of the Navy reviewing applications for both the Navy and Marine Corps. Payments will be retroactive to June 1, 2003, for all approved applications, no matter when received, to the extent otherwise allowed in law, providing the applicant is otherwise qualified. Services may be contacted at the following toll-free numbers:

Army 1-866-281-3254

Navy and USMC 1-877-366-2772

USAF 1-866-229-7074

Service reviews will determine which disabilities, if any, are combat-related or are the result of an injury for which the member was awarded a Purple Heart. Combat-Related includes those disabilities that are the direct result of armed conflict or from conditions that simulate combat, or that result from the performance of uniquely hazardous military duties, or caused by an instrumentality of war.

Services will presume that disabilities awarded VA disability compensation based on service-connected exposure to hazards, which are clearly combat-related, are combat-related for the purpose of CRSC. These include Agent Orange, Gulf War illnesses, Radiation Exposure, Mustard Gas and Lewisite. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) will require combat-related documentation.

Retirees will be informed of denied applications and the reason for denial. They may reapply later if they are able to show they meet the program criteria or appeal the decision if they believe their disabilities were combat-related, but were denied compensation by their Service.